

Family Development Research Project

Brief Program Description

The Family Development Research Project (FDRP) began as an omnibus effort to serve low income, low education families by providing education, nutrition, health, safety, and human service resources for the 108 families. The goal was the support of child and familial behaviors that sustain growth and development after the intervention ceases. Home visitors, or CDTs (Child Development Trainers), visited each family weekly from before the birth of the baby until the child was five years old and graduated from the FDRP. FDRP targets very deprived families (low in both income and education) early in the last trimester of pregnancy. Program Curriculum was theoretically based on Erik Erikson and Jean Piaget's work as well as language development theory and Saul Alinsky's ideas of empowerment of poverty families. Program Service Delivery was divided into home visitation, infant-fold, and family-style delivery. Home visitation: CDTs visited 15 families each week demonstrating ways and means to nurture child development. Family problems, financial, emotional, social, and nutritional were dealt with as they arose. Infant-fold: Infants were assigned to a caregiver for attention, cognitive and social games, sensorimotor activities and language stimulation. Play materials were used to help children develop means-ends relationships, object permanence, causality, spatial concepts, and language. Family-style: Preschoolers attended a multiage program that conceptualized the environment as supporting child-chosen opportunities for learning and peer interaction in a space- rather than time-oriented framework. When the children were teenagers, about 10 years after their graduation from the program, they were assessed again. More of the FDRP youth expressed a liking for their own physical and personal attributes compared with the contrast group. Only 6% of the program youth in the follow-up sample were processed as probation cases by the County Probation Department as compared to 22% of the control youth. Estimated juvenile court costs were also lower for program youth as compared with control youth. Education outcomes were not as remarkable for males as for females.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

Program Developer

Alice Honig

Syracuse University

202 Slocum Hall

Syracuse, NY 13244-1250

Phone: (315) 443-4296

Email: ahonig@syr.edu